



101 N. 14TH ST., 17TH FLOOR
RICHMOND, VA 23219

*Air Force Association
American Legion
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Virginia Army/Air National
Guard Enlisted
Association
Virginia National Guard
Association*

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JLC Contact
**Virginia Army / Air
National Guard
Enlisted Association**
Robert Barnette
r.barnette55@
gmail.com
804-559-2310

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Position Paper 2022-05

Promote Hiring of National Guard and Reserve Members

OBJECTIVE: To promote the hiring of members of the Virginia National Guard and the Reserves by recognizing Virginia employers who hire our citizen-soldiers.

BACKGROUND:

- Members of the Virginia National Guard and the Armed Forces Reserves are citizen-soldiers, meaning that when they are not serving on federal or state missions, they are in their communities and working to support their families.
- As a Commonwealth and a Nation, it is important that we recognize our employers who hire our citizen-soldiers. One way to do this is through a small-scale grant to encourage and incentivize hiring.
- After the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program was established, the Governor and General Assembly authorized the creation of a grant program to recognize small to medium-sized employers that hire Virginia veterans.
- If a Guardsman or Reservist serves on federal active duty, they earn Veterans status. Employers who hire these members of the Guard and Reserve would qualify for a V3 employer grant.
- However, if a Guardsman or Reservist is not called to federal active duty, they are not considered a Veteran. Employers who hire them do not qualify for the V3 grant program.

DISCUSSION:

- This proposal seeks to build on the V3 Program employer grant model by awarding a one-time grant of \$1,000 to a Virginia employer who hires a member of the Virginia National Guard or the Armed Forces Reserves.
- Extending eligibility for a V3-type grant to Virginia employers who hire Virginia's citizen-soldiers will both incentivize hiring of these talented individuals and recognize the vital dual role played by citizen-soldiers in our work places and our Commonwealth.
- The JLC recommends a small-scale initial investment of \$50,000 in FY22, sufficient to award 50 grants of \$1,000 each. The Departments of Veterans Services and Military Affairs would report back to the Governor and General Assembly of the demand for this grant, and whether any shortfalls exist that should be addressed in future fiscal years.

- The JLC recommends that the eligibility requirements for the \$1,000 grant be modeled on the V3 employer grant requirements, including the requirement that the employee be retained for one-year prior to the employer applying for the grant.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Governor and General Assembly approve \$50,000 to create a grant program to incentivize small to medium-sized Virginia employers to hire members of the Virginia National Guard and Armed Forces Reserves.